

SUCCESS STORY

AWARE-RH Improves Water and Sanitation for 18,000 People in Togo and Niger



School children gather around a hand-washing system installed by CREPA in Togo. Photo by Adama Kone, Management Sciences for Health



Funded by UNICEF, this impluvium was built by CREPA to gather rain water in a Togo community. Photo by Adama Kone, Management Sciences for Health

By building latrines, repairing water sources, and providing education about hygiene and environmental sanitation in rural villages and schools in Togo and Niger, AWARE-RH has contributed to better health for more than 18,000 people.

Diarrhea kills about 2 million children every year, largely because they lack clean water and basic sanitation services. In rural Togo, only about 50 percent of the population has access to clean water, and only 17 percent have access to basic sanitation facilities. Mortality due to diarrhea and the resulting dehydration represents as much as 10 percent of infant deaths in Togo.

Other consequences of the lack of clean water and basic hygiene and sanitation facilities include low school attendance. Girls drop out of school because they have to walk long distances every day to find water and carry it home.

The prevalence of waterborne diseases is high in Togo. These diseases include not only diarrhea caused by *E. coli* and other bacteria but also parasites and outbreaks of cholera and typhoid fever. Most rural people do not have toilets in their homes, and during the rainy season, unprotected wells and other water sources often become polluted with human waste.

In 2007 AWARE-RH received funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to support water and sanitation activities in West Africa. A child survival specialist visited Togo and Niger to assess the feasibility of carrying out a water and sanitation program with partners that include UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO).

UNICEF introduced AWARE-RH to CREPA, a regional NGO based in Burkina Faso that specializes in building and providing clean water supply and sanitation facilities at low cost. The program selected four villages in three districts of Togo; the population covered is about 5,000 people. In Niger 752 children and teachers from two schools and 13,000 people from the community benefit from the program.

In collaboration with UNICEF, CREPA, and the Division of Hygiene and Sanitation, staff from AWARE-RH visited villages

in Togo and Niger and discussed the program with community members. AWARE-RH finalized its plans based on the communities' needs.

A subcontract was signed between AWARE-RH and CREPA to build latrines, repair wells and school water collectors in four villages in Togo, provide clean water to Torodi Central School in Niger, and repair the few existing latrines and build new ones at two schools and in the commune of Torodi.

Achievements in Togo

CREPA conducted visits to inform communities about the Togo project and make sure of their involvement and cooperation. Materials and equipment for latrines were provided, and hand-washing equipment was supplied to the schools. Training materials were adapted for the coordinator of water and sanitation activities and the community members involved.

Health workers, and teachers and health committee members in each school, were trained in water supply management, latrine management, and promotion of hygiene and sanitation measures. Members of parents' associations were also trained in hygiene and environmental sanitation. Members of village water committees were trained on water supply management for communities.

The program built 160 latrines and repaired 8 wells with manual pumps in four communities. The program repaired three water collectors in schools so the containers can be used to collect clean water for drinking and hand-washing.

Achievements in Niger

A subagreement was signed with CREPA Niger, and a five-month project started in November 2007. The project was funded largely by AWARE-RH (78 percent), with contributions from the commune of Torodi (10 percent), WHO, and CREPA.

To date, the following activities have been carried out:

- **in schools:** At the Central School, a water pipe was constructed, two areas were prepared for better management of water supply, two latrines were repaired, and two blocks of three latrines each (one block for girls and one for boys) were constructed. Classrooms were equipped with materials for hand-washing and clean drinking water, and a school sanitation club was established. An additional school has benefited from the repair of its latrine. The project has also built a school garbage collection facility;
- **in communities:** The project built three blocks of six latrines each in community marketplaces. The Torodi commune is setting up a fee system for the use of public latrines

so that they can be maintained and more latrines can be constructed throughout the commune.

Besides building facilities, the project has developed communications tools and training modules on health education for schools. These materials cover sanitation, hygiene, diarrhea, nutrition, malaria, and HIV & AIDS. Twenty-five participants—including 17 teachers, 2 school principals, and representatives from the mayor's office, district education management committee, health center, and community—were trained.

The project emphasized communication and behavior change by employing two outreach workers to educate people about the use and management of their new water and sanitation facilities. Both schoolchildren and adults appreciate and will benefit for a long time from the positive changes in their environment.